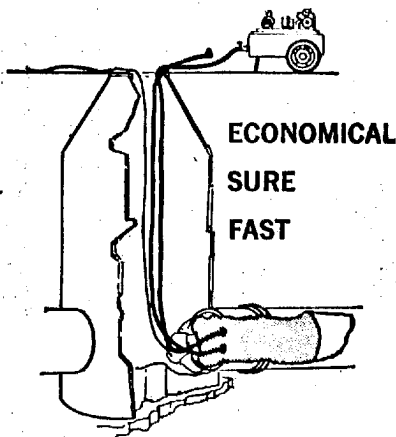


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Unions push contractors up against wall forcing . . .

# Wages Rates Up 15% in 1970

Construction wage rates will increase faster in 1970 than at any time in the past. Across the nation, contractors can expect to pay their workers 15% more next year than in 1969. But many cities will experience hikes of more than 15%.

There is no indication yet that this wage acceleration will slow down in 1970. Union leaders argue that their worker's wages are being eaten up by inflation. Thus, they race against erosion of the purchasing power of the dollar. Unfortunately, they are so far out in front of this rate that construction costs are soaring.

If 1970 is the year when contractors will make a real stand against huge wage demands, the battle will be hard fought and punctuated by long strikes.

Construction bidding volume is running even with last year's record pace, in spite of tight money. And while this means the contractor has more work, it also means he has a labor shortage (see p. 172). Unions know there is plenty of work, and so they continue their restrictive membership practices and thereby increase their bargaining power.

Unless the wage inflation spiral can be flattened, many planned construction projects are going to die on the drawing boards.

• **Cities in trouble**—Common labor rates in 10 of ENR's 20 cities were up more than 10% for the year. Dallas apparently experienced the worst wage inflation, moving 31% higher than a year ago. Kansas City fared just slightly

better, up 28% for the year. Pittsburgh felt a 19% gain in common labor costs in 1969, while Boston and Cincinnati both jumped to the tune of 17%.

Skilled labor increases, according to ENR's Skilled Labor Index (bricklayer, carpenter and structural ironworker) saw increases that were not as severe as in common labor. Eleven of 20 cities had gains of 10% or better, led by labor-torn Philadelphia, up 18%. Denver and Minneapolis both had 17% gains, and Cincinnati moved up 15%.

Baltimore, New York and Philadelphia common labor rates, though sky-high already, moved up only 4 to 5% for the year. Skilled labor in Pittsburgh was up just 2.8% for the same time period.

Hourly wage increases of \$0.75 to \$1.00-per-hour will occur in several trades in 13 of ENR's 20 cities next year. In the other cities, many contracts are under negotiation or will expire early in 1970, and the pay hikes coming from these agreements are expected to be even higher.

Structural ironworkers in New York are setting the pace with an agreement that will mean a \$1.77-per-hour increase by July. Another big pay boost will come the way of Kansas City ironworkers in March, \$1.40 per hour.

• **How much?**—By weighing rates of increase in past years and comparing them to existing long-term contracts, it is possible to project some labor costs in 1971.

(Continued on p. 119)

## Automatic Wage Boosts for 1970 —Cents/hr

	Common Labor		Skilled Labor		Equipment Operators	
	Building	Heavy Construction	Bricklayers	Carpenters	Structural Ironworkers	Tractor
Atlanta.....	3/1: 0.10	3/1: 0.10	1/1: 0.15	1/1: 0.45	3/1: 0.50	1/1: 0.15
Baltimore.....	Ex 3/31	Ex 3/31	Ex 3/31	7/1: 0.45	0/1: 0.25	7/1: 0.25
Birmingham....	Ex 9/1	Ex 9/1	Ex 9/1	5/1: 0.15	Ex 7/1	10/1: 0.45
Boston.....	0/1: 0.70	Ex 4/30	5/1: 0.77	6/15: 0.30	7/1: 0.78	Ex 9/1
Chicago.....	Ex 5/31	Ex 5/31	Ex 5/31	Ex 5/31	0/1: 0.25	Ex 2/28
Cincinnati.....	Ex 5/31	Ex 5/31	Ex 6/1	Ex 5/31	Ex 6/1	Ex 12/31/69
Cleveland.....	Ex 4/30	5/1: 0.45	Ex 4/30	Ex 4/30	Ex 4/30	Ex 6/1
Dallas.....	7/1: 0.46	7/1: 0.46	Ex 6/30	2/1: 0.37	4/1: 0.40	Ex 5/1
Denver.....	5/1: 0.35	3/1: 0.35	5/1: 0.50	5/1: 0.70	5/1: 0.70	3/1: 0.50
Detroit.....	Ex 4/30	Ex 4/30	Ex 6/30	Ex 6/15	Ex 5/1	Ex 4/30
Kansas City....	Ex 3/31	1/1: 0.22	Ex 3/31	4/1: 0.40	1/1: 0.55	4/1: 0.80
Los Angeles....	Ex 4/30	Ex 4/30	Ex 4/30	5/1: 0.85	Ex 8/15	4/1: 0.85
Minneapolis....	5/1: 0.90	Ex 12/31/69	5/1: 0.95	5/1: 0.90	5/1: 0.90	Ex 12/31/69
New Orleans....	5/1: 0.20	4/1: 0.15	5/1: 0.25	5/1: 0.17	5/1: 0.42	1/1: 0.25
New York.....	1/1: 0.36	1/1: 0.36	Ex 5/31	1/1: 0.46	1/1: 0.60	7/1: 0.27
Philadelphia....	7/1: 0.34	7/1: 0.34	1/1: 1.15	5/1: 0.44	7/1: 1.17	1/1: 0.57
Pittsburgh.....	Ex 5/31	Ex 5/31	Ex 5/31	Ex 5/31	Ex 5/31	5/1: 0.27
St. Louis.....	5/1: 0.75	5/1: 0.75	1/1: 0.42	5/1: 0.45	5/1: 0.50	11/1: 0.27
San Francisco..	1/1: 0.20	1/1: 0.20	Ex 6/30	6/15: 0.83	Ex 8/15	5/1: 0.75
Seattle.....	7/1: 0.38	7/1: 0.38	6/1: 0.80	6/1: 0.45	7/21: 0.55	6/15: 0.25
	6/1: 0.30	6/1: 0.30				6/1: 0.60
						1/1: 0.41
						6/15: 0.28
						6/1: 0.60
						1/1: 0.41
						7/1: 0.27
						6/1: 0.60

\* No contract expiration or scheduled increases in 1970 \*Ex: Contract expiration date

110 CIRCLE 110 ON READER SERVICE CARD

December 18, 1969 • ENGINEERING NEWS-RECORD

Common laborers in New York that year should earn \$8.81 per hour, 36% more than they are earning now. In Minneapolis, a laborer would get a 32% raise to \$7.00 per hour. And in Boston, he may get \$6.60 per hour, up 28% over his current salary.

A skilled tradesman might get \$8.15 per hour in Denver during 1971, up 31% over this year. In Minneapolis, he's likely to earn \$8.57 per hour, up 30%. And in St. Louis, he should make 21% more—\$8.37 per hour.

## ENR Construction Wage Indexes 1957-'59=100

### Hourly base rates plus fringe benefits

	Common Labor				Skilled Labor			
	November	'66	'67	'68	November	'66	'67	'68
Atlanta.....	161	170	184	196	142	151	163	176
Baltimore.....	139	145	156	163	135	142	151	168
Birmingham.....	153	173	179	193	134	142	152	161
Boston.....	150	156	163	190	145	154	165	185
Chicago.....	145	157	170	181	146	155	169	187
Cincinnati.....	146	166	198	231	139	153	173	198
Cleveland.....	147	168	188	207	146	167	187	205
Dallas.....	146	157	169	222	134	138	153	172
Denver.....	147	156	167	187	140	149	157	184
Detroit.....	151	167	182	198	147	162	182	207
Kansas City.....	148	156	164	209	139	145	152	167
Los Angeles.....	156	166	175	182	149	160	170	179
Minneapolis.....	157	162	171	192	143	153	163	190
New Orleans.....	156	172	195	217	139	145	168	182
New York.....	167	182	195	203	155	163	176	187
Philadelphia.....	147	157	168	176	139	145	153	180
Pittsburgh.....	151	154	173	205	144	150	169	181
St. Louis.....	159	178	191	218	149	158	166	184
San Francisco.....	171	187	197	214	162	173	184	201
Seattle.....	149	156	171	187	147	155	170	185

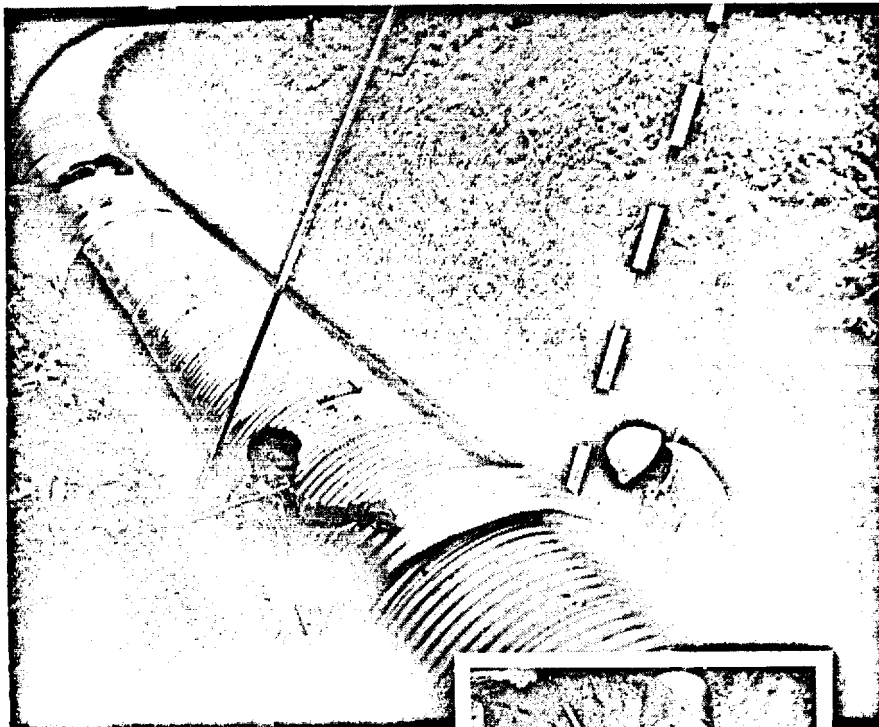
	Electricians				Mechanical Trades			
	November	'66	'67	'68	November	'66	'67	'68
Atlanta.....	152	156	174	195	143	154	168	184
Baltimore.....	144	151	161	170	143	153	165	176
Birmingham.....	139	146	157	172	139	156	170	181
Boston.....	156	170	180	193	164	166	187	201
Chicago.....	143	156	175	191	147	155	164	173
Cincinnati.....	135	143	162	183	137	148	171	197
Cleveland.....	144	163	182	202	145	163	184	204
Dallas.....	132	151	151	178	139	145	156	174
Denver.....	139	148	156	161	146	151	153	174
Detroit.....	150	157	183	209	147	167	190	210
Kansas City.....	147	157	178	192	151	163	189	208
Los Angeles.....	147	154	160	172	163	179	192	205
Minneapolis.....	143	155	166	198	144	157	166	184
New Orleans.....	144	153	162	179	149	159	175	188
New York.....	148	153	153	164	154	161	170	184
Philadelphia.....	135	143	148	160	142	153	156	175
Pittsburgh.....	136	139	152	166	143	156	181	186
St. Louis.....	151	156	163	179	153	164	180	197
San Francisco.....	169	179	199	218	192	205	224	239
Seattle.....	138	159	167	189	139	151	165	177

	Equipment Operators				
	November	'66	'67	'68	
Atlanta.....	145	155	160	181	ENR wage indexes are based on:
Baltimore.....	142	148	151	175	
Birmingham.....	146	157	168	177	
Boston.....	155	165	178	192	
Chicago.....	144	154	162	170	Common labor. Building and heavy construction average.
Cincinnati.....	137	153	167	206	Skilled labor. Bricklayer, carpenter and structural ironworker.
Cleveland.....	143	163	184	213	Mechanical trades. Plumber, steamfitter and sheet metal worker.
Dallas.....	123	126	194	224	
Denver.....	134	142	154	169	
Detroit.....	147	164	188	219	
Kansas City.....	139	145	168	218	
Los Angeles.....	168	177	183	213	
Minneapolis.....	141	148	154	161	
New Orleans.....	147	157	170	185	
New York.....	153	165	177	186	
Philadelphia.....	152	162	169	192	Equipment operators. Power shovel, tractor and air compressor.
Pittsburgh.....	152	159	176	187	
St. Louis.....	150	161	176	181	
San Francisco.....	167	181	190	216	
Seattle.....	165	173	184	208	

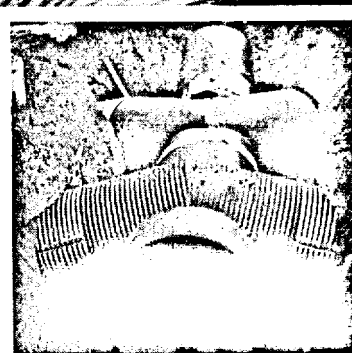
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